

COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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" By the corruption of Parliament, and the absolute influence of a King, or his Minister, on the two Houses, we return into that state, to deliver or secure us from which Parliaments were instituted, and are really governed by the arbitrary will of one man. Our whole Constitution is at once dissolved. Many securities to liberty are provided, but the *Integrity*, which depends on the Freedom and Independence of Parliament, is the Key-stone that keeps the whole together. If this be shaken, our Constitution totters. If it be quite removed, our Constitution falls into ruin. That noble fabric, the pride of Britain, the envy of her neighbours, raised by the labour of so many centuries, repaired at the expense of so many millions, and cemented by such a profusion of blood; that noble fabric, I say, which was able to resist the united efforts of so many races of giants, may be demolished by a race of pygmies. The Integrity of Parliament is a kind of Palladium, a tutelary Goddess, who protects our state. When she is once removed, we may become a prey of any Enemies. No *Agamemnon*, no *Achilles* will be wanted to take our city: *Thersites* himself will be sufficient for such a conquest."—BOLINGBROKE.

[641]

[642]

HAMPSHIRE MEETING.

This Meeting, the Requisition for holding which was inserted in the present volume, at page 545, was held at Winchester, on the 25th instant; and, as I think the proceedings of great importance to the nation at large, I will here give a correct account of them. It is very well known, that, for a long time past, County-Meetings have been merely the work of party; and, in fact, that the Resolutions, or other things, emanating from such Meetings, have not contained the sentiments of the people of any county, any more than decisions, in another place, have corresponded with the sentiments of the nation at large. Therefore, it is necessary to give the history of this Meeting in Hampshire, from which history the nation will be able to judge of the weight which ought to be attached to the opinions and the decision of the Meeting. The Speeches, made upon this occasion, and which occupied nearly four hours in the delivery, it would be impossible to give here, nor would it be of much use, if I were able to do it, seeing that they have been published so much at length, in the *STATESMAN* and other daily papers, and seeing that the several clauses of the first Resolution do so fully express all the most material principles, maintained by those who spoke in support of that Resolution.—As to the origin of the Meeting, the history of that will be found at the page before referred to, and in the Address to the county, which I subjoined to the Requisition. What remains to be done is to give a faithful account of what took place, after the publishing of that Requisition and Address; which account I, as having had a considerable share in the business, owe to the county and to the public at large.—In the Address before

mentioned, I expressed a wish to see the leaders of both the political parties come to the meeting, and, laying aside all party considerations, join in taking that leading part, upon this occasion, which was suitable to their rank and property. That I was perfectly sincere in this wish an account of my conduct afterwards will clearly shew.—Having been informed, that the Earl of Northesk approved of the Meeting, I, after writing a letter to him, waited upon his lordship, at his own house, on the 15th of April, when I stated to him, in a very full manner, my sentiments as to what ought to be declared at the Meeting; I repeated my wish respecting the persons to take the lead, but added, that if Mr. Powlett chose it, I thought, the propositions, whatever they might be, ought to come from him.—To the same effect I had before written to Mr. Powlett himself.—On the 24th, when I had requested to wait upon Lord Northesk again, he did me the honour to call upon me, and to inform me, that Mr. Powlett had prepared some Resolutions to be offered to the Meeting. I then shewed him the Resolution, which I had just drawn up (and which was passed at the Meeting), upon which he gave no opinion whatever. In his lordship's presence I then enclosed a copy of that Resolution in a letter to Mr. Powlett; and as I understood that Mr. Herbert was at Mr. Powlett's house, I requested the latter to shew the Resolution to the former, at the same time distinctly stating in my letter, that, if none of them chose to move that Resolution, or something substantially the same, I should think it my duty to do it.—By the bearer of my letter Mr. Powlett sent me word, that he would meet me at the George Inn at Winchester, the next morning at ten o'clock.

He came at about half past eleven; and, as there was no time to lose (the Meeting being to be held at twelve o'clock) I immediately went into the room where he was, and where, at my request, his Resolutions, which will be found below, were read, in the presence of Lord Northesk, Mr. Bonham of Petersfield, and Mr. Budd, of Newbury. I frankly declared to him, that they did not meet my approbation, and that I was morally certain, that the Meeting would view them in the same light; and I added, in nearly these words: "as we have not a moment to lose, and as straight lines in politics, as well as in geometry, are the shortest, I will frankly tell you, Sir, that if those Resolutions are offered to the Meeting, I shall move to set the whole of them aside, and to substitute my Resolution in their place." After a few words more, I and Mr. Budd walked out, leaving Mr. Bonham and Lord Northesk with Mr. Powlett, the former of whom, we were in hopes, would have prevailed upon Mr. Powlett to take what I proposed instead of his own. —Here ended the communications between us.—Just before I saw Mr. Powlett, I had, by mere accident, seen Mr. Chamberlayne of Weston, and whom I had not seen, or had any communication with, for a year and a half before. Mr. Chamberlayne, who was sitting down to breakfast, said to me, in his usual frank manner, "come, Cobbett, let's see what you have got to propose to this Meeting to-day." —"There," said I, "take the paper and read it, while I run down to Mr. Powlett, who is just come in." —The moment I left Mr. Powlett, I went back to Mr. Chamberlayne, who told me that he most cordially approved of every word in the Resolution. I then gave him an account of what had taken place between me and Mr. Powlett, and added: "if they should render it necessary for me to move this Resolution as an amendment, will you second me?" To which he answered, "I will." —Not another word passed between us; nor did I even see him again, till he stepped forward, and, in a speech which deserved and which received unbounded applause, fulfilled his promise.—I have thought it right to state all the circumstances, in order to shew, first, that, from beginning to end, I did all that I could possibly do, to avoid the necessity of being myself the person to take the lead at the Meeting, and to leave that office in the hands of those, to whom it would be more natural for the

county to look up; secondly, to shew, that Mr. Chamberlayne and I had not (as being near neighbours it might be supposed we had) been contriving any operation for the day of meeting, and, in justice to Mr. Chamberlayne's talents as well as his motives, to show that he had had no time whatever to frame a speech for the occasion; thirdly, to show, that there was, on our part, no trick, nothing done underhand, nothing, from beginning to end, which could be construed into a design, or a wish, to induce the Meeting to adopt any thing, which did not perfectly correspond with their own opinions and wishes; and, fourthly, to show to the nation at large, that the Resolution, passed at the Meeting, does contain the free and unbiased sentiments of that Meeting, the like of which Meeting Winchester had not seen, I believe, within the memory of man, and certainly not for many years past.—The Meeting was opened in the usual place; but that being instantly filled, I proposed an adjournment to the great Hall of the Castle. Even that, however, being thought too confined a space, it was determined to adjourn to the Grand Jury Chamber, as a place to speak from, while the audience took their station in the court-yard of the Castle.—The number of persons present, exclusive of comers and goers of the town, might be from eighteen hundred to two thousand, as nearly as I could guess. They consisted chiefly of the principal tradesmen and yeomanry from all parts of the county, persons able to spare the time and to afford the expence of carriages and horses; nor should it be forgotten, that, except the time of harvest, a more busy season of the year could not have been fixed on.—We saw, upon this occasion, none of that rabble that follow the heels of an election candidate for the sake of a little dirty drink; we heard no senseless bawling on one side or the other; no squads of hirelings to hiss or to applaud; what we had the pleasure to behold from the Grand-Jury Chamber windows that day, was, an assembly of sober, intelligent men of property, a fair representation of the sense and the integrity of this county; and, therefore, the decision cannot fail to have great weight with the kingdom at large, especially when it is considered, that the discussion lasted for nearly four hours, that ample opportunity was afforded to every one to express his sentiments, and that the regularity of the whole of the proceedings of the Meeting (aided as it was by the con-

spicuous ability as well as the strict impartiality of the High Sheriff) might afford an example even to assemblies, whose proceedings, down to minute particulars, are regulated by orders having the force of law.—Such was the assembly to whom the Resolutions were submitted, and I now proceed to insert those Resolutions, beginning with those proposed by Mr. Powlett, whose motion was seconded by the Honourable William Herbert; and this I do, in order to put upon record what the Meeting rejected as well as what they adopted.

"Resolved, That his Majesty's Ministers, "by their attempt to deter the Mover of "the late Inquiry, by threats of disgrace "and infamy, by their conduct during its "progress, and by their influence which "they exerted at its conclusion, have sa- "crificed the true interests of the Crown, "treated with contempt the opinion and "the Rights of the People, and proved "themselves unworthy the Confidence of "their Country."

"Resolved, That it is expedient that Parliament should take into their serious consideration the great and increasing Expenditure of the State, by which the means of Corruption are multiplied, and immediately adopt the most effectual mode of retrenching all Profusion of the Public Money, and diminishing the influence of Ministers over the Electors of the Kingdom and their Representatives.

"Resolved, That the discovery of abuses will prove of little permanent advantage, unless followed by further Inquiry and Reform, as the only means of transmitting to Posterity that Constitution, which is the pride of every Briton, and the admiration of the World.

"Resolved, That the late Inquiry in Parliament has proved, beyond the possibility of doubt, the existence of Abuses of a most ruinous tendency, in various Departments of the State.

"Resolved, That G. L. WARDLE, Esq. by his manly and patriotic Efforts in the late Inquiry, has rendered an important service to his Country, is entitled to the Praise of all honest and independent Men, and merits the grateful Thanks and warmest Approbation of this Meeting.

"Resolved, That the Thanks of this Meeting are particularly due to the Minority of 125 who supported the Motion of G. L. WARDLE, Esq. and to those, who, though differing in minute particulars from the Hon. Mover, had the Honesty and Courage to oppose the

"Attempt of his Majesty's Ministers to "exculpate the late Commander in Chief, "and shewed, by their Votes, a Convic- "tion in their Minds of Abuses in the "State, and a firm Determination to resist "them."

These Resolutions were objected to by me for several reasons: generally, because they were an inadequate expression of the sentiments, which I thought ought to be expressed, upon the occasion; and, particularly, because they omitted to express distinguished approbation of the conduct of those members of parliament, who had acted a distinguished part in support of Mr. Wardle, and also of those Hampshire members, by name, who had voted in the minority of 125, while all the other Hampshire members had been either absent, or had voted against Mr. Wardle upon that most interesting occasion; but, with regard to this point, I objected to the Resolutions, in a more pointed manner, and without being able to suppress my indignation, seeing that they omitted the names of SIR FRANCIS BURDETT and LORD FOLKESTONE, without whose support and assistance, the whole nation must be convinced, that it would have been impossible for Mr. Wardle to have proceeded on to that success, which attended his most excellent exertions.—He, I am certain, is the last man in England to deny this: he has repeatedly acknowledged it in the House; and would it not be shameful for us to endeavour to suppress so important a truth?

—Though Sir Francis Burdett was, by illness, prevented from attending during great part of the examinations, does not every one perceive the great weight which was given to the charges by his *seconding* the motion for inquiry? And, as to Lord Folkestone, not only did he firmly stand by Mr. Wardle, when the whole of one side of the House, and many on the other side of the House, were openly and violently assaulting him, and endeavouring to run him down; but his lordship had the merit of bringing to light himself, one very important branch of the subjects of inquiry, namely, *the Loan transaction with Kennett*. And, were these two gentlemen to be merely huddled into the 125, without any particular mark of approbation? And, were Mr. Whitbread and those by whose exertions of eloquence so much was achieved to pass without being particularly named? Besides, and I beg the reader to mark it, if these Resolutions had passed, *Sir Francis Burdett* would not have

been thanked by us at all ; for, though he spoke, almost at the risk of his life, during the debate ; though he did that while he actually leant upon his crutch, he was unable to go to vote on the night of the division, and, of course, was not one of the hundred and twenty five, to whom Mr. Powlett and Mr. Herbert wished the meeting to confine their thanks.—But, this was what we had to expect, if Mr. Powlett suffered himself to be led into any thing belonging to party, of which it is very notorious that Sir Francis Burdett is the great and declared enemy ; this was to be expected from men, who should still cling to either party, and who had heard Sir Francis Burdett, in the House as well as out of it, declare, over and over again, that he liked one of the factions just as well as the other ; and, this was to be expected from such persons in Hampshire more than any where else. To such persons here it must have been deadly to propose thanks to Sir Francis Burdett, when they recollect, that, at the election of 1806, one party had, in hand-bills published for the express purpose, accused the other of having his good wishes, and that the other, in a counter-hand-bill, had vowed to God, that they held his good wishes in abhorrence, and added, as a proof of this, that one of their candidates, Mr. Chute, had gone off, post-haste, to Middlesex to vote against Sir Francis, and for that very Mr. Mellish, who has now been censured by the unanimous voice of Middlesex for having voted against Mr. Wardle ; aye, that very Mr. Wardle, to whom both factions, at our meeting, were willing to give thanks.—To both parties, therefore, it must have been singularly mortifying, to see such a numerous and respectable meeting ; to see, in fact, the good sense, the justice, and public virtue of the county, voting, in the same place where their hand-bills had been distributed against sir Francis Burdett ; voting, after the most full and attentive hearing, *thanks to that same Sir Francis Burdett !*

Aye, last Tuesday's proceedings have convinced them, unless their minds are for ever shut against the light of truth and reason, that the people, the real people, of this county, are completely undeceived ; that they now know who are their *real* friends, and that any attempt to restore the influence of delusion will be, and must be, unsuccessful.—I objected, further, to these Resolutions, because one of them was exclusively levelled *against the present ministry* ; and, Sir Henry Mild-

may very truly observed, though it did not call upon us to praise the Opposition, and to express our wish for a change of ministry, it did, in fact, amount to the same thing.—The grounds, upon which I endeavoured to convince the Meeting of the propriety of adopting the Resolution, which it fell to my lot, though contrary to my wish, to have the honour of proposing, are so fully stated in that Resolution itself, that it will be quite unnecessary for me to dwell upon them here ; and, therefore, I shall now insert that Resolution, together with the others that were passed by the Meeting, and afterwards add a few words by way of concluding the history of the transactions of this memorable day.

" At a Meeting of the Freeholders and other Landholders, and the Inhabitants in general of the County of Southampton, holden at the Castle of Winchester, on the 25th April, 1809, the HIGH SHEIFF of the County in the Chair ;

" RESOLVED, That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to Gwyllym Lloyd Wardle, esq., for having instituted the recent Inquiry in the House of Commons relative to the Conduct of his Royal Highness the Duke of York ; for having unconnected with, and unsupported by any faction or party, prosecuted that laudable undertaking with talent and zeal, temper and perseverance, rarely to be met with ; and especially for having had the resolution thus to discharge his duty, in defiance of the threats of the King's Servants, and in spite of the prejudices endeavoured to be excited against his Charges, through the false and hypocritical pretence that they proceeded from a Jacobin Conspiracy, a pretence which, for many years past, has been the best ally of corruption, and through the means of which pretence, artful and wicked men have but too long stifled the voice of truth, have abused the ear and drained the purses of this unsuspecting and loyal nation :—That the Thank of this Meeting be given to sir F. Burdett, bart., who seconded Mr. Wardle's motion for the Inquiry, and also to lord viscount Folkestone, for the active and zealous assistance which his Lordship afforded Mr. Wardle during the whole of the proceedings connected therewith and to both of these Gentlemen for their able and constitutional speeches in the discussion upon Mr. Wardle's Motion of the 8th of March, and the subsequent discussions, arising out of the evi-

"dence taken during the said Inquiry :—That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to lords viscount Milton and Althorpe ; to lord Stanley ; to the hon. T. Brand, and W. H. Lyttleton ; to sir S. Romilly, and sir T. Turton ; to major-general Ferguson ; and to S. Whitbread, J. C. Curwen, T. W. Coke, H. Martin, J. Calcraft, and C. W. W. Wynne, esquires, who during the discussions aforementioned, stood forward the advocates of impartial justice ; and also to the Minority of 125, who divided in favour of Mr. Wardle's motion, amongst whom we, as Hampshiremen, observe with pleasure and with pride, the names of sir H. Mildmay, bart., and of Admiral Morkham, and Newton Fellowes, esq., while we, though not with very great surprise, observe, and trust that the fact will be remembered, that the name of neither of the Members for this County does appear upon that honourable list :—That, in the course of the above-named Inquiry, acts of meanness, profligacy, and corruption, unparalleled, as we firmly believe, in the history of any Government in the world, have been brought to light, and proved to our perfect conviction ; and that while we, as Englishmen and loyal subjects, cannot help feeling sorrow and shame at seeing the Son, and indignation at seeing so many of the Servants, of our Sovereign, involved in such scandalous transactions, we cannot, as men setting a proper value upon religious instruction and example, help entertaining the same feelings, and, if possible in an aggravated degree, at seeing deeply implicated in those transactions, no less than five Ministers of the Established Church ; nor can we refrain from an expression of our anxious hope, that the Clergy in general (following, in this respect, the example of the two Reverend Gentlemen who signed the Requisition for this Meeting), will lose no opportunity of inculcating an abhorrence of such practices, and thereby shewing, that the Church, like her Founder, is no respecter of persons, and that her endowments are not received as the wages of dependence and sycophancy, but as the worthy hire of the labourer in the vineyard of Christian piety, and of private and public virtue :—That in adverting to the cause of the injurious and disgraceful acts, thus revealed and demonstrated, this Meeting cannot help observing, that in the Act of Parliament, commonly called the Act

"of Settlement, in virtue of which Act and of which Act only, his Majesty's Family was raised to the throne of this kingdom, it is declared, ' That no person who has an office, or place of profit, under the King, or receives a pension from the Crown, shall be capable of serving as a Member of the House of Commons ; ' but that, notwithstanding the wise precaution of this Act, which is one of our great constitutional laws, and which, as its preamble expresses, was made ' For the further Limitation of the Crown, and better securing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject,' it appears from a Report laid before the House of Commons in the Month of June last, in consequence of a Motion made by lord Cochrane, that there are in that House Seventy-eight Placemen and Pensioners, who, though part of what they receive is not stated, are, in the said Report, stated to receive £178,994 a year out of the Taxes raised upon the people, and, of course, out of the money to watch over the expenditure of which they are appointed :—That, if any doubt could have remained, as to the baneful effects of such a state of the House of Commons, that doubt must have been removed by the rejection of Mr. Wardle's above-mentioned proposition, in the teeth of the clearest and most conclusive evidence, positive as well as circumstantial, written as well as verbal ; and upon which occasion it appeared that all the King's Ministers, all the Placemen, and all the Pensioners then present, voted against the said position :—That, in the Act of Parliament, commonly called the Bill of Rights, it is declared, ' That the election of Members of Parliament ought to be free,' and, in the same Act it is declared, ' That the violating of the freedom of elections of Members to serve in Parliament, was one of the crimes of King James the 2nd, and one of the grounds upon which he was driven from the Throne of this Kingdom ; but that, notwithstanding this law, which is said to be one of the great bulwarks of the Constitution, and notwithstanding divers other laws, made for the purpose of preventing undue returns of Members of Parliament, it does appear, from evidence given during the above-said Inquiry, that Lord Clancarty and Lord Viscount Castlereagh, both of them Servants of the King, and the latter a Privy Counsellor, a Secretary of State, and a Mem-

" ber of the House of Commons, did offer " to give a Writership in the East Indies, " in Exchange for a Seat in the House of " Commons, and that the failure of that " corrupt negociation was owing, not to " any disinclination on their part, but on " the part of the seat-seller, to whom " the offer was made:—That this Meet- " ing have observed, that during a debate " in the House of Commons, on the 20th " of this month, upon the subjects of the " aforesaid Inquiry, Thomas Creevey, Esq. " one of the honourable Minority of 125, " did distinctly state, that, it was not only " his belief, but that it was within his own " knowledge, that Seats in Parliament had " been bought and sold; that the Treasury " not only openly bought and sold those " Seats, but kept, in a great degree, a mo- " nopoly of the market, and that it was " perfectly well known, that a dissolution " of Parliament was not an appeal to the " people, but an appeal to the Treasury; " and that this Meeting have further ob- " served, that, in answer to this statement " of Mr. Creevey (for which that Gentle- " man is entitled to our particular thanks), " the King's Minister, Mr. Perceval, did " not attempt to deny the facts alledged, " but contented himself with insinuating, " that the opposite party, when in power, " had been guilty of similar practices: " —That, from the foregoing facts, as " well as from numerous others, notorious " to the whole nation, this Meeting have a " firm conviction, that it is in the House " of Commons, as at present constituted, " that exists the great and efficient cause " of that profligacy of manners amongst so " many in high life; of that corrupt dis- " posal of offices; of that endless train of un- " punished peculations; of that squander- " ing of our earnings and incomes; of that " establishment of an army of foreigners " in the heart of our country; of that in- " capacity in the conducting of public " affairs, both at home and abroad; and of " all that national misery and disgrace " which have been but too long so se- " verely felt, and the dangers to be ap- " prehended from which have now at- " tracted the serious attention of even the " most thoughtless and unobserving:— " That, therefore, this Meeting, anxious " alike for the preservation of his Majes- " ty's Throne and legitimate authority, " and for the restoration of the rights and " liberties bequeathed them by the wis- " dom, the fortitude, and the valour of " their forefathers, hold it a duty which " they owe to their Sovereign and his suc-

" cessors, to themselves and their chil- " dren, to the safety, happiness, and re- " nown of their country, to declare their " decided conviction, that no change for " the better can reasonably be expected, " without such a Reform in the Commons " House of Parliament, as shall make that " House, in reality as well as in name, the " Representatives of the People, and not " the instruments in the hands of a Minis- " ter; and further to declare, that it will " be expedient for us, at a future con- " venient time, to assemble in County- " Meeting, in order to consider of a Pe- " tition to the King, praying that his Ma- " jesty will be graciously pleased to afford " us his Royal countenance and support in " our constitutional efforts against a faction " of borough mongers, not less hostile to " the true dignity and just prerogatives of " his Majesty's Crown, than to the in- " terests and feelings of his faithful, suf- " fering, and insulted people.

" RESOLVED unanimously, That the " Thanks of this Meeting be given to Wm. " Powlett Powlett and Wm. Cobbett, Es- " quires, for the part they respectively " took in calling the Meeting, and for " their conduct thereat.

" RESOLVED unanimously, That the " Thanks of this Meeting be given to " the High Sheriff, for his readiness in " convening the same, and for the impar- " tiality with which he presided.

" RESOLVED unanimously, That these " Resolutions be signed by the Sheriff, in " the name, and on behalf of the Meeting, " and that the same be printed and pub- " lished in the County Papers, and in the " Statesman, the Morning Chronicle, the " Times, and the Courier London News- " papers; and that the Sheriff be requested " to forward the Vote of Thanks to Gwyl- " lym Lloyd Wardle, Esq.

" Signed on behalf of the Meeting,
" JOHN BLACKBURN, Sheriff."

Now, before I advert to some of the ob- " jections which were urged against the Re- " solution which I proposed, let me put upon " record the fact, that there appeared to be " for it *almost the whole* of the Meeting. The " question was, in consequence of a very ju- " dicious choice of the High Sheriff, to be " decided by the *holding up of hats*, and the " hats, in some parts of the area, were, for " the Resolution, so thick as not only to " touch one another, but to be held one over " another; whereas for the Resolutions pro- " posed by Mr. Powlett, there were, I be- " lieve, only *eight* hats held up. Several

gentlemen said, that there were only five. It is, in so short a space of time, and so wide a surface for the eye to cover, very difficult to speak positively; but, I think, I could safely aver, that there were not more than ten, one of which was the hat of Mr. Powlett's own groom, who had had the modesty to keep on the outskirts of the Meeting.—I do not thus state particulars, because it is a proof of a triumph to me; but, because it is a proof of the triumph of the good-sense, the sound principles, and the public-spirit of the county. I do not state them as any mark of the county's disregard for Mr. Powlett, who is deservedly an object of respect with the whole county, and especially with the yeomanry, who formed so large a portion of the Meeting; but, as a proof, that even the partiality which such a gentleman could not fail to create in favour of any motion, was not sufficient to induce the county to adopt a motion which they thought insufficient for the purpose of expressing those political sentiments, which, upon this important occasion, it appeared their evident duty to express.—I know that Mr. CHAMBERLAYNE wants no praise; but, I am sure I should disappoint the county if I did not say, that his speech was one of the best ever delivered in any place, and so far surpassing any thing ever before heard at a County Meeting, as to be beyond all competition. In manner as well as in matter it was equally an object of admiration. The whole of the proceedings will be given in an Evening London paper, the STATESMAN, where, of course, Mr. Chamberlayne's speech will find a conspicuous place; but, though a very able short-hand writer was present for the purpose of making a correct report, I am certain, before I see that report, that it is impossible for even that gentleman to do complete justice to this admirable speech. To be sure, it was the most lucky of all accidents, that Mr. Chamberlayne should happen to drop into the Inn just at the moment when he did. If I had had to choose through the whole county, and, as far as I know, through the whole kingdom, for a man to lend the weight of his character as well as of his talents to any effort of mine, I could not have selected such another man. This was what I thought the moment I had the good fortune to see him; this was what was said by every one after the Meeting was over; and this was what our opponents most sensibly and severely felt.—The county has also to thank Mr. JONES

of Sway, who made a very excellent speech in support of the Resolution, and whose talents cannot, upon future occasions, fail to be of great use in effecting that reform, without which nothing of real utility will have been done.—Sir HENRY MILDMAY, who was received in the most flattering manner by the Meeting as a young man, who had had the spirit and the sense to break from the trammels of the county factions, disapproved of the Resolutions of Mr. Powlett as breathing a party spirit; and of mine he disapproved, in as far as they conveyed a tacit censure upon the two county members, one of whom, *Mr. Chute*, was from illness unable to attend his duty in Parliament, at the time when the 125 gave their votes. Mr. BIGG WITHER stated the same about Mr. Chute's illness, and, with modesty quite equal to his judgment, said, that, on the part of the other member, *Mr. Heathcote*, he should *appeal* from that Meeting to the *freholders*; that is to say, to the Dock-yards, the Barracks, the Custom-house, and to all the swarm of creatures, who are held in slavery by a dependence upon the ministry for bread. The Rev. Mr. POULTER (who, as the reader will, probably, remember, sometime ago wrote me a letter in defence of his friend, Mr. Garnier) said nearly the same about Mr. Chute's illness, though he seemed to allow, that that gentleman was out a *fox-hunting* on the day when the memorable division took place. Mr. PORTAL corroborated what had been said about this illness; and said further, that Mr. Chute, at the time alluded to, only rode to the cover, in his great coat, and saw the hounds *throw off*, but took no part in the chase. We might, if we had thought of it, have reminded them, that SIR FRANCIS BURDETT, *whom they refused to thank at all*, went on that same day, and spoke in the House of Commons upon *crutches*; but, we contented ourselves with stating that all that we proposed to the Meeting, upon the score of Mr. Chute, was, to declare that his name was not in the list of the 125; and that, when that acknowledged truth had been declared by a Vote of the Meeting, we had no objection to Mr. Chute's friends proposing, in a separate Resolution, a declaration of the fact of his *inability* to attend parliament at the time referred to. This they did; but, though MR. NEVILLE of Easton added himself to the other vouchers for this fact, the Meeting, without any body's speaking against it, *negatived* the motion, and for this plain reason, that a man, who was able to ride so far in

the morning to see his hounds throw off, must have been able to go to London in a carriage and to give his vote upon so important an occasion, than which nothing could be more characteristic of the justice and good-sense of the Meeting; and, I cannot help noticing, as an instance of their discernment, that when Mr. Neville said, "a fact, a fact, gentlemen; we only call upon you to resolve upon a fact," numerous voices exclaimed: "Yes, but we don't know the fact to be true."—Sir Henry Mildmay objected to that part of the Resolution, which related to *Lords Clancarty and Castlereagh*, upon the ground, that they were as yet *under trial* in the House of Commons; but, upon my bringing out the book of Evidence printed by order of that House, the Meeting thought themselves full as able to form a correct opinion, and *full as likely to pass a just sentence*, as the House of Commons were; and, a hundred voices at once issued from the assemblage, reminding Sir Henry Mildmay of certain late decisions.—These objections having been got over, there was another of the Rev. MR. POULTER to the form of our proceedings. He contended, that the Resolution introduced matters, to agitate which the Meeting was not called, and in support of which objection he appealed to the chair; but this objection the High Sheriff overruled upon the ground of the comprehensiveness of the Requisition, which certainly allowed us to discuss and to express our sentiments upon the remedy as well as the disease.—Mr. Poulter, gave into a good deal of personality, and brought what he appears to have looked upon as a pretty antithesis about the *Crown and Mitre* reposing in more security in the *sun-shine of Pall Mall* than amidst the *damp banks of Botley*; but, besides that Botley is well-known to be one of the driest and most healthy spots in the county, while Pall-Mall is for half the year smothered with smoke and fog, the jest had been rendered pointless by the sentiments which I had uttered about the king and his family, and after which any man in this whole world, except Mr. Poulter, would have been restrained from making such an attempt at personal sarcasm; and which attempt, as all his friends foresaw it would, brought upon him those scoffs, that general expression of contempt, to which I was sincerely sorry to see a gentleman of his sacred calling expose himself, and towards the producing of which every one present will do me the justice

to say, that I did not, in the smallest degree, contribute, contenting myself, as I did, with simply appealing to the Meeting, whether Botley had that day sent forth any thing indicative of hostility or disrespect to either Bishops or Kings.

—An attempt was afterwards made to divide the Resolution, making each clause a distinct resolution, and, of course, taking the sense of the Meeting upon each separately. To this I objected, upon the same ground that I have frequently given my opinion, that what Mr. Wardle has done is *nothing unless more be done*; and, that it is perfect nonsense to thank any one for telling you of your *disease*, unless his so doing leads to the pointing out of a *remedy*.—Here the objections stopped, the question was put, and the decision was what I have before stated.

There are several very important subjects, which I should have touched upon in this Number; but, I have not had time.—The Resolution passed in Hampshire is of great consequence in a *national* point of view; and, therefore, it was necessary to give a minute of its origin and progress; because, without minute particulars, it is impossible for those not present to form a correct judgment of the real value of the thing itself.

* * * In consequence of several Letters which I have received from distant parts of the country, I am induced to continue open the **SUBSCRIPTION FOR THE MISS TAYLORS**, till Saturday the 13th of May, when it will positively be closed.

COBBETT'S Parliamentary Debates:

The Subscribers to the above Work are respectfully informed that the Twelfth Volume is in a state of considerable forwardness.

COBBETT'S Parliamentary History of ENGLAND,

Which, in the compass of Sixteen Volumes, Royal Octavo, will contain a full and accurate Report of all the recorded Proceedings, and of all the Speeches in both Houses of Parliament, from the earliest times to the year 1803, when

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The Subscribers to the above work are respectfully informed, that the Fifth Volume will be delivered on Monday next, the 1st of May. It embraces the period from the Revolution in the year 1688, to the Accession of QUEEN ANNE, in the year 1702. For this period, the materials, as well for the Proceedings as the Debates, have been, for the most part, collected from the following Works : 1. The Journals of the House of Lords ; 2. The Journals of the House of Commons ; 3. The Debates of the House of Commons, from 1688 to 1694, collected by the Honourable Anchitel Grey, who was forty years member for the town of Derby ; 4. The Debate between the Lords and the Commons, at a Free Conference, held in the Painted Chamber, in the Session of the Convention, in 1688, relating to the words, "Abdicated," and "the Vacancy of the Throne," used in the Vote of the Commons ; 5. A Collection of the Debates and Proceedings in Parliament, in 1694 and 1695, upon the Inquiry into the late Briberies and corrupt Practices, printed in the year 1695 ; 6. Proceedings in the House of Commons against Sir John Fenwick, printed in the year 1698 ; 7. Timberland's History and Proceedings of the House of Lords ; and 8. Chandler's History and Proceedings of the House of Commons.—Here again, as in former Volumes, recourse has been had to the best historians and contemporary writers ; and, amongst others, to Burnet, Echard, Kennet, Oldmixon, Ralph, Tindal, Boyer, and Somerville. The Hardwicke Papers have also been consulted ; as also the State Tracts, and the Harleian Collection.—There is subjoined, by way of Appendix, a Collection of very scarce and valuable Parliamentary Tracts, taken from those of Lord Sommers, the Harleian Miscellany, and the Collection of State Tracts published during the reign of William the Third.

PROCEEDINGS

In COUNTIES, CITIES, BOROUGHS, &c. relative to the recent INQUIRY in the House of Commons, respecting the Conduct of the DUKE OF YORK. (Continued from p. 640.)

TOWN AND PORT OF SANDWICH.

At a General Meeting of the Freemen and Inhabitants of the Town and Port of Sandwich, in the county of Kent, held in the Guildhall in the said Town and Port, on Friday, the 7th day of April, 1809.

J. HARRISON, esq. Mayor, in the Chair.

Resolved unanimously, on the motion of Mr. J. Fowle, seconded by Mr. Robt. Curling, that the Thanks of this Meeting be presented to G. L. Wardle, esq., member of parliament for Oakhampton, for having brought forward in the honourable House of Commons an Enquiry into the Conduct of his Royal Highness the late Commander in Chief, for his firm and unremitting perseverance in establishing the Charges, and for his strenuous endeavours to check the further progress of improper influence and corruption.—That we think it our duty on this occasion to express ourselves firm in our loyalty and attachment to our King and Constitution.

Resolved unanimously, That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to the Mayor, for his readiness in calling the Meeting, and his impartiality in the Chair.—Ordered that the above Resolutions be inserted in the Courier and Canterbury Papers.—By Order of the Meeting.—GEO. GARRETT, Clerk.

BURGH OF ANNAN.

At a Meeting of the Burgesses and other Inhabitants of the Burgh of Annan, held the 11th of April, 1809, for the purpose of expressing their sentiments on the late Investigation into the Conduct of his Royal Highness the Duke of York as Commander in Chief of the Army of this country ; Mr. James Scott, one of the Baileys of the said Burgh, in the Chair :

1. Resolved unanimously, That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to G. L. Wardle, esq., M. P. for his able and intrepid exertions, in detecting and dragging into public view, the flagrant system of corruption, which for some years has prevailed in the disposal of military promotions. (*To be continued.*)

EAST INDIA COMPANY.

REPORT from the Committee of the House of Commons, on the Patronage of the East India Company—Ordered to be printed 23rd March, 1809.

The Select Committee, appointed to inquire into the existence of any Corrupt Practices, in regard to the Appointment and Nomination of Writers or Cadets in the Service of the East India Company ; or any Agreement, Negotiation, or Bargain, direct or indirect, for the sale thereof ; and to report the same, as it shall appear to them, to the House, together with their Observations thereupon ; and who were empowered to report the Minutes of Evidence taken be-

fore them ; and their Proceedings, from time to time, to the House,

Began their investigation by examining into a Case brought before them by Geo. Woodford Thellusson, esq. a member of this house, in which his patronage and confidence appear to have been grossly abused.—The whole Evidence being given at length in the Appendix, your Committee content themselves with inserting in this place, a short abstract only of this, and every other transaction ; giving the names of the persons appointed, of those by whom they were recommended, and by whom their nominations were signed, together with the names of the intermediate agents in any of the negotiations where money was paid or received.—Those appointments which have been completed in consequence of any such bargains, and upon which satisfactory evidence has been produced, will be placed first ; a second class will be found of nominations which appear to have taken effect, but with regard to which, from the death of some of the parties, or from deficiency of proof in other particulars, your Committee are unable to ascertain the names of the persons who were sent out to India. It is a satisfaction to your Committee, throughout the whole evidence, to remark nothing which traces any one of these corrupt or improper bargains to any Director, or induces a reasonable suspicion that it was done with the privity or connivance of any member of that court. Several negotiations which never took effect, will be found alluded to, or detailed in parts of the evidence ; which it was thought proper not to reject under the comprehensive directions “that your “Committee should inquire into any agreement, negotiation, or bargain, direct or “indirect, for the sale of such nomination ;” and when such information was received, they deemed it inexpedient to withhold it from this house, though they are fully aware that their desire of opening every channel of inquiry has led to an extent of examination, and to a mass of evidence, from which much might be retrenched without detriment, if it had been easy to establish a satisfactory principle of omission, or abridgment, which might have left nothing wholly irrelevant or trifling, while it comprehended whatever might be interesting either to this house, or to the East India Company.

WRITERS.—Mr. Ed. Js. Smith was nominated a Writer to Bengal in the season 1806-7, by Mr. G. W. Thellusson ; the appointment was given to his first cousin,

Mr. Emperor J. A. Woodford, who sold the appointment for 3,500*l.* through the agency of Mr. Tahourdin, solicitor, who received 100*l.* out of that sum. The other persons concerned in this negotiation were Mr. Wimbourn and Mr. Laing.

Mr. Fry Magniac was nominated Writer to Bengal in the year 1807-8, by Mr. G. W. Thellusson ; this appointment was also given to the same Mr. Woodford, and sold through the agency of Mr. Tahourdin. Mr. Beale was the purchaser, and the sum paid by him was 3,500 guineas, of which Mr. Woodford received 3,000*l.* Mr. Tahourdin 150*l.* ; the remainder was divided between Mr. Donovan and Mr. Garrat.

Mr. Henry Gardiner was nominated a Writer to Madras by Mr. G. W. Thellusson, in the season 1807-8. This appointment was likewise given to Mr. Woodford, and 3,000*l.* was received for it from Mrs. Gardiner, by Mr. Tahourdin for his own use, but upon an undertaking that he is to procure the next presentation of a living of the value of 300*l.* per annum for a friend of Mr. Woodford's. Mr. Boase, a partner in the house of Messrs. Ransom and Co. was privy to the bargain between Mr. Tahourdin and Mrs. Gardiner. Mr. Greenslade received an appointment for Ceylon in the way of exchange for this writership, which is the occasion of his name appearing in the transaction.

CADETS.—Mr. Henry Stoughton was appointed a Cadet to Madras, Jan. 1808, by George Abercrombie Robinson, esq. by the recommendation of Mr. Morland, who gave the appointment to Mr. Jones for a relation of his. Mr. Jones, through the agency of John Annesley Shee, sold it to Mr. Stoughton, father to the person appointed, from whom Shee received 500 guineas : he paid 180*l.* to Mr. Jones, and received of him an undertaking to pay 320*l.* upon his procuring for Mr. Jones a Woolwich Cadetship. This appointment has been vacated by the Court of Directors, in consequence of their having discovered the means through which it was obtained.

Mr. Thomas Kelly was appointed a Cadet to Bombay in April 1803, by sir Theophilus Metcalfe, bart. at the recommendation of Mrs. Scott. It was afterwards exchanged with Mr. Cotton, at his request, for a Madras Cadetship. Wm. Scott, tailor, the husband of Mrs. Scott, sold this appointment to Mr. Kelly, through the agency of David Brown, who received for it 150*l.* : Brown was paid 30*l.* or 40*l.* and a Mr. Southcomb, who introduced

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some of the parties to each other, received 10 guineas.

Mr. George Barker was appointed Cadet for the Bengal Infantry in Dec. 1808, by Robert Thornton, esq. at the recommendation of Mr. Mee. Mr. Mee sold this appointment for 200 guineas, through the agency of John Annesley Shee, who received 60*l.*

Mr. George Teulon was appointed to an Infantry Cadetship to Bengal in 1808, by Edward Parry, esq. in exchange for a Madras appointment given to capt. Sealy by Jacob Bosanquet, esq. Capt. Matthew sold this appointment for 120*l.* to captain Holmes for a friend of his; Annesley M'Kercher Shee was employed as agent for captain Matthew, who paid him 30*l.* and capt. Holmes paid him 10*l.*

Mr. J. S. Williams was appointed to a Bengal Cadetship by Mr. Cotton in 1808, in exchange for a Madras Cadetship of Mr. Manship's. This appointment was procured by Mr. Abercrombie, who was assisted with the loan of a sum of money by capt. Williams, the Cadet's father. Mrs. Eliz. Morrison and A. M'K. Shee were the agents employed.

Mr. Benj. Pratt was appointed a Cadet to Madras 7th Feb. 1806, by Sweney Toone, esq. at the recommendation of capt. Kennard Smith; who exchanged it with R. C. Plowden, esq. for a nomination of the next season. Mr. B. Pratt was recommended to Mr. Plowden by sir Nicholas Nugent. This appointment was purchased by Mr. H. Foster, through sir Nich. Nugent, for the sum of 150*l.* A. M'K. Shee acted as agent for Mr. Foster, and received 30*l.* or 40*l.* The original appointment was to Bengal, and it was exchanged for Madras.

Mr. John Power was appointed a Cadet to Madras in 1804 or 1805 by lord viscount Castlereagh, at the recommendation of lord Longueville, through the earl of Westmoreland. Mr. Power paid 200*l.* for this appointment to M. S. Salt. A. M'K. Shee was the agent for both parties, and received 50*l.* from Mr. Power.

Mr. Brathwaite Christie was appointed a Cadet to Madras 15th July 1807, by James Reid, esq. at the recommendation of h. r. h. the d. of Clarence. Mr. Page, navy agent in Great Russell-street, paid the sum of 200*l.* for this appointment to A. M'K. Shee, who paid 150*l.* to the rev. Mr. Lloyd, chaplain to h. r. h. the d. of Clarence, for procuring the same.

Mr. Thomas Maw was appointed a Cadet to Bengal in July 1807, by Robert

Thornton, esq. at the recommendation of the rev. Nicholas Corsellis for Miss Eliz. Spinluff. Miss Spinluff sold this appointment to Mr. Hewitt, a relation of Mr. Maw, through the agency of Mrs. Morrison and A. M'K. Shee, and received 70*l.* for it. Mrs. Morrison thinks the sum paid was 150*l.* or 180*l.* A. M'K. Shee received 30*l.*

Mr. Arthur Denny was appointed a Cadet to Madras on the 18th Feb. 1806, by G. W. Thellusson, esq. at the recommendation of the countess dowager of Westmoreland and Mr. George. This appointment was sold by Mr. George. Mr. Anth. Stoughton, uncle of the person appointed, paid to J. A. Shee, whom he employed to procure it, the sum of 250 guineas. David Brown was agent for Mr. George.

Mr. Henry Keating was appointed a Cadet to Madras on the 5th of June 1805, by John Manship, esq. at the recommendation of G. W. Thellusson, esq. in return for a Bombay nomination of the season of 1804 given to Mr. Manship. The uncle of Mr. Henry Keating purchased this appointment of Mr. J. Henderson, ship-broker, for 250*l.* or guineas. J. A. Shee received of Mr. Henderson about 45*l.* for his agency.

Mr. George Boys was appointed a Cadet to Madras on the 26th March 1806 (of the season 1805) by Charles Mills, esq. at the recommendation of Mr. (now sir W.) Fraser. This appointment was given by sir W. Fraser to Mr. Tho. Cusac, who sold it to Messrs. Barber & Sons, Cowper's-court, Cornhill, and received of them the sum of 150*l.* They were employed as agents for Mr. Boys's father, who paid for it the sum of 300 guineas. 100*l.* was divided between Mr. Barber and Mr. John Henderson. J. A. Shee was agent for Mr. Cusac.

Mr. W. Collett was appointed a Cadet for the Bombay Infantry by the India Board, on the 3d of July 1805. This appointment was in the nomination of lord Castlereagh, who, at the recommendation of the right hon. John Sullivan, gave it to Richard Codman Etches, for a relation of his, on account of services performed by Mr. Etches for the government. Mr. Etches sold it to Mr. Chaplin, an attorney, for the sum of 250*l.* J. A. Shee was agent for Mr. Pasmore, an attorney, who received the money for Mr. Etches.

Mr. John Manson was appointed Cadet for Bengal the 26th Feb. 1808, by the India Board, at the recommendation of Edw.

Cooke, esq. Mr. C. Etches procured this appointment through Mr. Cooke, for a relation of his, on account of services performed by Mr. Etches for the government. Thomas Watson was employed as agent to sell the same, as mentioned in the next appointment.

Mr. Robert Manson was appointed Cadet for Bengal, Feb. 1808, by G. W. Thellusson, esq. at the recommendation of Mr. Herbert. Tho. Watson sold this appointment, and received the sum of 500 guineas of Messrs. Anderson, of Philpot-lane, for this and Mr. John Manson's appointment, who purchased the two for a friend of theirs for his two nephews. A. M'K. Shee received 35*l.* of Watson; and lady Leigh received from Watson about 200*l.* for the latter appointment.

Mr. Thomas Casey was appointed a Cadet by W. Devaynes, esq. on the 9th July 1806, at the recommendation of Mr. Herbert, now abroad as purser of the Euphrates extra ship. Mr. Herbert sold this appointment to Messrs. Henry Houghton & Co. of King's Arms Yard, correspondents of Mr. Casey's relations, who lived in Ireland, for the sum of 250 guineas; Mr. John Henderson was agent for Mr. Herbert, and received 50 guineas.

Mr. Thomas Locke was appointed a Cadet for Madras on the 3d Feb. 1807, by John Bebb, esq. at the recommendation of James Pattison, esq. in exchange for one of Mr. Pattison's Bombay nominations. This appointment was purchased by the rev. Dr. Locke of Farnham, for his nephew, of Thomas Watson, who sold it for lady Lumin, and paid her 200*l.*

Mr. Samuel Lewis was appointed a Cadet in 1800, by Sweny Toone, esq. at the recommendation of Mr. Evans. This appointment was passed from Mr. Evans to Mr. Sanderson: A. M'K. Shee seems to have procured it of Mr. Wright, and received 300 guineas from the Cadet's father. Mr. Sam. Lewis being a Mulatto, and thereby disqualified, procured a young man of the name of Phillips. to personate himself and pass the previous examinations, for which he paid him 20 guineas.

A Cadetship for Madras appears to have been purchased for a person of the name of Brown, in 1804 or 1805, which was sold by Mr. Herbert for 250 guineas; but your Committee could receive no satisfactory information by whom the party was nominated, nor his Christian name. Henderson and Shee were employed as agents, and received part of the above sum.

A Cadetship in the nomination of J. Manship, esq. given by him to Mrs. Welch, appears to have been sold; but the parties to that transaction, who have been examined, state, that they are unable to recollect the name of the person appointed. The name of Mrs. Welch does not appear as recommending to any of Mr. Manship's Cadetships in 1805 or 6.

Another, in the nomination of sir Lionel Darell, appears to have been given to and sold by the rev. Thomas Lloyd; but Mr. Lloyd's name does not appear as recommending any of the Cadets nominated by sir L. Darell in 1801 and the following year.

It appears in evidence, that some other nominations of this description have been purchased: but your Committee have not been able to discover and bring before them some of the persons who appear to have been parties to these transactions; particularly sir Nich. Nugent, Mr. W. Lewen Tugwell Robins, Mr. Jos. Home, cap. Matthew and cap. Holmes. A further examination into some other bargains, is precluded by the death of lady Lumin, lady Leigh, and cap. Sealy.

The attention both of the Legislature and of the East India Company has been attracted at various periods to Abuses, which were supposed to exist in the disposal of their Patronage; in consequence of which, at the time when their charter was renewed, an oath was framed, to be taken by each Director within ten days after his election, containing, among other engagements, the following: "I do swear, That I will not directly nor indirectly accept or take any perquisite, emolument, fee, present or reward, upon any account whatsoever, or any promise or engagement for any perquisite, emolument, fee, present or reward whatsoever, for or in respect of the appointment or nomination of any person or persons to any place or office in the gift or appointment of the said Company, or of me as a Director thereof, or for or on account of stationing or appointing the voyage or voyages of any ship or ships in the said Company's employ, or for or on account of or any ways relating to any other business or affairs of the said Company." 33 Geo. 3. c. 52. s. 160.—In the By-laws of the East India Company, c. 6. sect. 5. a penalty is imposed upon every Director taking any reward on account of any appointment, in double the amount of such reward, two-thirds of which to the Company and one-third to the Informer; and such Director is rendered ipso

facto incapable of holding any place whatever under the Company.—The form of Declaration on every writer's Petition, is, “I recommend this Petition, and do most solemnly declare that I have given this nomination to
and that I neither have received myself, nor am to receive, nor has any other person, to the best of my knowledge or belief, received, nor is to receive, any pecuniary consideration, nor anything convertible in any mode into a pecuniary benefit on this account.” The form of Certificate required to be signed by the nearest of kin to each Cadet, contains the following declaration : “I do further declare, that I received the said appointment for my son

gratuitously, and that no money or other valuable consideration has been or is to be paid, either directly or indirectly, for the same ; and that I will not pay or cause to be paid, either by myself, by my son, or by the hands of any other person, any pecuniary or valuable consideration whatsoever, to any person or persons who have interested themselves in procuring the said nomination for my son from the Director above-mentioned.”—The printed preparatory Instructions, which are circulated by the East India Company for the use of those who may be nominated Cadets, begin with the following Resolution : “That any person who shall in future be nominated to a situation, either civil or military, in the service of this Company, and who shall have obtained such nomination either directly or indirectly by purchase, or agreement to purchase through the medium of an agent or other person, shall be rejected ; and the person so nominated shall be rendered incapable of holding any situation whatsoever in the Company's service : and in the event of any person having obtained an appointment in the manner before stated, and proceeded to India previous to its being discovered, such person shall be dismissed the Company's service and ordered back to England, and shall also be rendered incapable of holding any situation whatsoever in the Company's service.” It is to be observed, that abuses in the disposal of Cadetships are better guarded against than in that of Writerships, since the present form of Certificate has been applied to them ; for in the Writerships the Director himself only declares, that to the best of his knowledge or belief no pecuniary consideration has been or is to be received ; but with regard to every Cadet, the parent or next of kin makes a similar

declaration for himself. The cases which are exhibited in this report demonstrate that such declarations are not of sufficient force to prevent a very extensive traffic in those nominations, which are apparently the best secured by a positive denial of all undue practices. An enquiry was set on foot by the Court of Directors in 1798 upon the allegation and suspicion of abuses in the nominations of Writers ; the origin, progress and failure of which it may be proper to give in some detail.—25 April 1798 : A Committee of the Directors was appointed to investigate into the truth of the alleged practice of the sale of Patronage, and to consider of such means as may appear likely to prevent the same in future, if such practices have occurred. 9th July : Each Director's nomination of Writers was laid before the Committee, who resolved that each Member of the Committee should state in writing the names of the parties to whom he has given the nomination, together with the reasons which induced him to give the same : and that the several parties who have received such nominations for their sons, &c. be required to produce satisfactory information to the Committee upon oath, or in such manner as the Committee shall deem most expedient, that neither they nor any person on their account, or with their privy or knowledge, have given or promised to give any consideration on account of such nomination, either to the Director from whom they obtained the same, or to any person on his behalf : and it was agreed to recommend to the Court to direct each individual Member of the Court to do the same. 1st August 1798 : The Court approved this Report ; and (15th August) each Director in office, as well as those out of by rotation (except Mr. Devaynes) gave explanations in writing.—28th Feb. 1799 : It was resolved, That every appointment made in consequence of corrupt practices be null and void, unless the parties to whom the appointment is given shall, upon examination before the Committee, make a fair and candid disclosure of all the circumstances attending the same. It was likewise resolved, that each Director should in future, on the Petition of the Writer whom he nominates, “ declare upon his honour to whom he has given the appointment, and that he neither has received himself, nor is he to receive, nor has any other person to the best of his knowledge or belief received, nor is to receive, any pecuniary consideration, nor anything convertible in

"any mode into a pecuniary benefit on "this account." The Direction being changed in April; on the 14th of August 1799, a new Committee to investigate the truth of the sale of Patronage, &c. was appointed. 17 Jan. 1800: The draft of a Letter proposed to be addressed to the parents, &c. of persons appointed Writers since 1793, requesting them to declare whether the appointments were given without any pecuniary or other consideration, was considered by the committee; when a discussion arose, whether it should be on oath; when it was adjourned till the 21st of Jan.: and it being then suggested whether it would be proper for the Committee to proceed in their inquiry, it was decided in the affirmative.

The Committee then proceeded to consider the drafts of the letter to the parents, &c. a draft of a Report to the Court stating their reasons for recommending this mode of investigation, as also the form of a declaration for the persons who have received such appointments. The consideration was adjourned to the 24th of Jan.; when a discussion ensuing thereon, and on the necessity and expediency of the mode of public investigation therein proposed; it was agreed to postpone the said Report, and to proceed to act agreeably to the authority and instructions already received from the Court. The Committee resolved, that in their opinion the parties to whom each Director had given nominations, should be called upon to state on what grounds they have received the same, in every case that the Committee may deem it expedient so to do.

The Committee then examined, *viva voce*, its different members, as a preliminary to the proposed measure; each member declared upon his honour that what he had stated in regard to his appointments was strictly true, and expressed his readiness to confirm the same by his oath. —28th Jan. 1800: The Committee met to consider a draft of a Report to the Court, communicating their proceedings, and proposing further measures for the Court's adoption, as also a draft of a letter referred to in the said Report.—31st Jan.: The Report of this day's date, with the letters to the parents, &c. and the declaration to be made by them, was approved. —5th Feb.: The Court, after considerable discussion of the above, confirm the same; but resolve that the consideration of what is further to be done on the said Report be adjourned to the 11th of Feb.: when it is resolved, that the Committee of

Patronage be instructed to proceed in the examination of the other members of the Court, as they did with themselves. It was then moved, that the declaration proposed in the Report be upon oath: on this, the motion of adjournment was carried.—25th Feb.: A Report signed by 15 Directors, approves the Declaration, and recommends that the several persons to whom the same is sent be requested to confirm such declaration upon oath.—Another Report on the same day, signed by 12 Directors, recommends that no further proceedings be had in this business till the 1st of May. Both the above Reports are approved by the Court.—26th Feb. 1800. The right hon. Henry Dundas addressed the Court, acknowledging the receipt of their minute; and stating, that he feels it a duty that he owes both to himself and the Court, to omit no means in his power for ascertaining whether any person whom he has obliged through the favour of the Court, has presumed to abuse his kindness in so sordid and unwarrantable a manner.

Sir Francis Baring dissents from the Resolutions to call for the declaration on oath.

The Committee of Patronage ceasing with the Direction in April; on 18th June 1800, the Court took into consideration the propriety of re-appointing the said Committee.—It being moved, "That a Committee of Patronage be re-appointed;" an amendment was moved, to leave out all the words after the word "that," and to insert in their room the following, "it does not appear to this Court, that any circumstance has been stated to the Court, by which the Committee lately appointed for an inquiry into the disposal of Patronage, that can induce or would justify the Court in adopting the illegal and novel administration of extra-judicial oaths to a variety of persons, not directly connected with the East India Company or the management of its affairs, and which, though it would tend to throw a suspicion upon the Court at large, which no circumstances that have hitherto come to the knowledge of the Court can induce them to suppose the members thereof merit, would not, they conceive, be an effectual mode of bringing to light any such practices, even if such in any partial instance should have existed."

On the question for the Amendment being put, the votes for, and against, were

[668] equal; when the lot decided for the Amendment.

25th June: The Chairman, Deputy Chairman and eight other Directors dissent from the Resolution not to re-appoint the Committee of Patronage.—24th Sept.: A motion was made in the Court of Proprietors, that the above Proceedings be read; they were read accordingly, and notice given by the mover, of his intention of bringing the subject forward at a future Court.—20th Jan.: 1801, It was “moved, That it is the opinion of this Court, “that the Inquiry into the alleged abuse of “Patronage, ought to be continued.”—It was moved to amend the said motion, by adding thereto the following words, “to investigate any charge that may be “made of corrupt practices against any “one or more of the Court of Directors.” The above Amendment passed in the negative;—When a ballot was demanded on the original question; it was, 3d Feb.: 1801, lost by a majority of 139; 411 voting for the question, against it 550.

The following opinion of Counsel was given to the Court of Directors, previous to the ballot being taken; viz.

“Case for the East India Company:
“Whether the Court of Directors, or any Committee of the said Court, whether considered as a Committee of that Court, or as a Committee of Proprietors, be legally authorized to call for the examination of such persons upon oath, as recommended by the Court of Directors in their Resolution of the 25th Feb. 1800; or whether in their opinion any magistrate would be justified in administering the oath so recommended; and generally to advise concerning the legality and effect of such proceedings.—We are of opinion, that neither the Court of Directors, nor any Committee of the said Court, or Committee of Proprietors, have any legal authority to require or receive examinations of persons upon oath, as recommended by the Resolution of the Court of Directors of the 25th Feb.: 1800; and that no magistrate will be justified in administering such oaths.—“We therefore think the proposed proceedings would be contrary to law.”—(Signed) J. Mitford, W. Grant, J. Mansfield, T. Erskine, George Rous.”

If this house should in its wisdom adopt any legislative measures for the purpose of preventing all traffic in the disposal of offices under government, it will, in the opinion of your Committee, be proper to extend the same protection to Patronage

held under the East India Company; but they see no reason to recommend any special or separate provisions as applicable to their case, judging that the East India Company has within its own power the most effectual means for accomplishing that end.—It can never be advisable, without absolute necessity, to add new offences to the long catalogue already enumerated in the penal statutes; nor is it wise to diminish the sanctity of oaths by resorting to them upon all occasions. Where solemn declarations have been habitually disregarded, little reliance can be placed upon the sanction of any other species of asseveration. Instances occur but too frequently, where an oath comes to be considered merely as part of the official form by which an appointment is conferred; and the human mind, fertile in self-deception, accommodates itself with wonderful facility to overcoming all scruples, or applies a perverse ingenuity to evading all restrictions which stand in the way of present interest. Little fear of detection is entertained, when transactions are in their nature private and confidential; and the appellation of honour, most improperly applied to negotiations of this clandestine kind, attaches, by a singular perverseness, a stronger degree of obligation to the performance of such engagements, upon the very ground that they are illegal.

With a view to prevent all dealings in Patronage, the obvious and natural mode will be to take away all inducement to traffic in it; and this can only be attained by making the hazard of such speculations greater than the temptation.—The regulations of the Company are founded upon this true and efficacious principle. But examples have hitherto been wanting to demonstrate the determination of the Court of Directors to enforce their orders; no instance of purchasing or procuring by undue means an appointment in the civil or military service of the East India Company, after such appointment had actually taken place, and since the Court's Resolution of 28th Feb. 1799, having been so far established, as to enable the Court to dismiss the party appointed.—The immediate consequence of the information contained in this Report, must be, that a certain number of persons in the service of the Company will be instantly deprived of their employments, recalled from India, and declared incapable of again receiving any appointment under the Company. The money improperly given for procur-

ing these situations, will be absolutely lost, without any possibility of recovery; and those who have either imprudently or corruptly been concerned in obtaining what they conceived to be benefits for their relatives or friends, will find that they have done the greatest injury to those whom they desired to serve, by inducing them to dedicate some of the best years of their lives to an employment, which the original defects, and corrupt practices through which it was obtained, must disqualify them from prosecuting.—Hard as some of these cases must be, and innocent and ignorant as many of the young men nominated under these circumstances probably are, of the undue means by which their Appointments were acquired, your Committee are of opinion, that nothing but a strict adherence to the rule laid down by the Court of Directors, can put a stop to the continuance of these abuses, and prevent the chance of their recurring.—In 1779, when, in the course of the investigation already mentioned, indemnity was offered to all those who would make a fair and candid disclosure of all the circumstances through which their situations had been procured, though information was gained with regard to facts, no example could be made, in consequence of such disclosure, of those who were found offending; and it may be doubted whether such practices have been less prevalent since that inquiry, than before. The deficiency of their power to compel persons to answer, precluded the Court of Directors from discovering, if they punished, or from punishing if they discovered, the traffic which was the subject of complaint.

The oath taken by the Directors seems as effectual as any thing which can be devised for the purpose of guarding against corruption, so far as the Directors themselves are immediately concerned; and your Committee have already remarked, that no one case of corruption or abuse, which has been before them, affects any member of that Court. It is, in the passing through several hands, which happens frequently with regard to the more numerous and less valuable Appointments of Cadets, that opportunities for this sort of negotiation are presented, which, without a greater degree of vigilance and strictness on the part of each Director, at the time of making such nomination, it will be impracticable to prevent in future.

Your Committee may perhaps be exceeding the limits of their province, in the further considerations to which this subject leads; but as they decline recommending any special legislative enactment, their view of the proper remedy for these abuses may be incomplete, unless they proceed to suggest some other observations.—The unpleasant duty of increased vigilance is not likely to be performed without some incitement of benefit or disadvantage, attendant upon the exercise, or neglect of it; and it is equally conformable to experience to presume, that patronage will continue to be abused, so long as no inconvenience is felt by the person primarily giving, or by the person ultimately receiving it.—Where strict examination is a duty, any species of negligence cannot be wholly blameless; and it appears not unreasonable to curtail in some degree, the patronage of those, who have either not been sufficiently watchful in the disposal of it, or whose diligence has been unsuccessful in preventing the abuses which are complained of. As an additional check against those who are inclined to purchase such appointments, it may be expedient that a bond should be given by the parent, guardian, or friend of every person receiving a nomination, containing a penalty to be paid to the East India Company, upon proof being made at any subsequent period, that any valuable consideration was given for such appointment; that species of proof being deemed sufficient to levy the penalty, upon which the Court of Directors may think themselves authorized to vacate the appointment.

The practices which are developed in the present Report, and other transactions which this house has recently had under its cognizance, are sufficient to demonstrate, that patronage of various descriptions has, in several instances, become an article of traffic; that an opinion of the generality of such practices has been prevalent to a still greater extent; and that fraudulent agents have availed themselves of this belief, to the injury of the credulous and unwary, and to the discredit of those in whose hands the disposition of offices is lodged. It will depend upon the steps which may be taken in consequence of these Inquiries, whether such abuses shall receive a permanent check, or a virtual encouragement.